The nodal Ministries for these 12 programmes/initiatives/projects have been requested to publish DMU reports on the website on a quarterly basis; while reporting in respect of the remaining six programmes/initiatives/projects will be commenced once the contours of these are concretized.

(d) and (e) The function of the DMU is to act as a mechanism for oversight to improve monitoring, delivery of output and transparency for ensuring effective delivery of select programmes. However, the primary responsibility for implementation, appropriate monitoring and follow up action remains that of the Ministry/States concerned. Accordingly, the latest position on identified programmes and the steps taken for the implementation would be available with the Ministries concerned.

Population under poverty

825. SHRI N.K. SINGH:
SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had information of exact percentage of population under poverty at present;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether the various committee's constituted by Government has submitted their various figures on population under poverty; and

(d) if so, the facts thereof and further steps taken by Government to bring population under poverty above the poverty line?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) and (b) The Planning Commission estimates the number and proportion of persons living below the poverty line at the National and State level from a large sample survey on household consumer expenditure carried out by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) at an interval of approximately five years. The latest poverty estimates have been released for the 2004-05, according to which, 30.17 crore persons *i.e.* 27.5 per cent of the total population were living below the poverty line. The national Poverty line at 2004-05 prices is Rs. 356.60 per capita per month in the rural areas and Rs. 538.60 per capita per month in urban areas.

(c) The Planning Commission is the only Nodal agency in the Government of India which estimates the poverty in the country. The methodology for estimation of poverty is reviewed from time to time. Planning Commission has constituted an Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Prof. Suresh D. Tendulkar to look at the methodology related issues including alternative conceptualization of poverty and to recommend any changes in the existing procedures of official estimates of poverty.

(d) The poverty alleviation has been one of the guiding principles of Planned Development. Besides aiming at accelerated economic growth rate, the government has also

followed the strategy of direct intervention. A number of anti-poverty programmes are being implemented. Some of the major schemes and programmes in this regard are: National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) of the Ministry of Rural Development, which guarantees at least 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every rural household, Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) provides self employment to the rural poor who are organized into Self Help Groups (SGHs) and are provided income generating assets through a mix of bank credit and subsidy. Under Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) the shelterless rural BPL households are provided financial assistance for construction of houses. National Social Assurance programme (NSAP) provides social security in the form of IGNOAPS (Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme), pension scheme for widows and disabled etc., Aam Admi Bima Yojana and a Health Insurance Scheme for the unorganized sector workers are the other measures taken by the government to alleviate poverty. Similarly the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation is implementing Swarna Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) which aims to encourage urban self-employment through subsidy and loan with a component of skill development training, Rajiv Awas Yojana aims to make the country slum-free. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs Food and Public Distribution is implementing Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), which provides foodgrains at subsidized rates to the poor, the Antodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) provides foodgrains to the poorest of the poor families at a highly subsidized rates.

Method adopted for poverty assessment

†826. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many of the State Governments have disagreed to the method adopted by the Centre to assess the level of poverty;

(b) whether the Planning Commission has itself set the parameters to assess the level of poverty;

(c) whether the existing parameters have become outdated;

(d) whether State Governments would be taken into confidence while setting new parameters; and

(e) whether the global scenario would also be kept into consideration while setting these new parameters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) and (b) The Planning Commission has been estimating the level of poverty in the country using the methodology suggested by the Expert Group on Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor, since 1997. On an average, consumer expenditure of Rs. 49.9 per capita per month is associated with a calorie intake of 2400 per day in rural areas and Rs. 56.64 per capita per month with a calorie intake

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.